



STATE OF MICHIGAN

**Family
Independence
Agency**

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News Release

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October 14-20 is Investing in Ability Week

Annual celebration dedicated to focus on ability and promote employment for Michigan citizens with disabilities

LANSING—Governor John Engler has declared October 14-20, 2001 as Investing in Ability Week in Michigan.

An annual event, Investing in Ability Week is designed to promote the employment of people with disabilities by encouraging employers and the public to focus more on individuals' abilities than on disabilities.

"This observance is especially important as the next generation of people with disabilities prepares to enter the work force," said Engler. "Investing in Ability Week gives us an opportunity to remind employers that hiring people with disabilities makes good business sense."

Michigan first observed Investing in Ability Week in 1988.

The Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns encourages and assists communities and organizations around the state to celebrate Investing in Ability Week each year. The commission continues to actively work with business and governmental leaders to remove the physical and attitudinal barriers that keep people with disabilities out of the work force. *(continued)*



JOHN ENGLER, Governor

The commission is administratively attached to the Family Independence Agency.

“More and more business leaders are realizing that there is a largely untapped pool of qualified workers with disabilities,” said Family Independence Agency director Douglas E. Howard. “Through organizations like the Business Leaders’ Network, employers are informing other employers about these hiring opportunities.”

Typical Investing in Ability Week activities include the distribution of printed educational materials, broadcasts of public service announcements, job fairs, employer seminars and awards ceremonies recognizing employers who have shown that hiring people with disabilities is good for the work place and for the marketplace.

For example, last Oct. 11-13 the Muskegon Investing in Ability Week Committee distributed 7,000 flyers at seven McDonald's restaurants in Muskegon. The flyers included local resource information to help employers hire people with disabilities.

The Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns is comprised of 21 governor-appointed members and eight Lansing-based staff. The commission serves as an advocate and information resource for Michigan’s 1.7 million people with disabilities.

Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns executive director Gerry Mutty noted, “We are very pleased to see the continued efforts of numerous communities in the state to plan and carry out innovative events and activities to highlight the benefits of hiring workers with disabilities.”

For more information on Investing in Ability Week contact Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns by telephone voice/TTY at (517) 334-800 or by Internet www.mifa.state.mi.us/mcdc/mcdc/htm

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■ For more information consult the FIA Internet website